

Leeds Studies in English

Article:

Christine E. Fell, 'Some Domestic Problems', *Leeds Studies in English*, n.s. 16 (1985), 59-82

Permanent URL:

https://ludos.leeds.ac.uk:443/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=123652&silos_library=GEN01



Leeds Studies in English
School of English
University of Leeds
<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/lse>

SOME DOMESTIC PROBLEMS

By CHRISTINE E. FELL

The second list of tools and implements in *Gerefa*, a text found once only, in the manuscript CCCC 383,¹ is a long one comprising a number of objects which, in a modern household, might seem more properly divided between the dining-room, the kitchen, the store-room and the tool-shed. To impose such a distinction on the Anglo-Saxon household might seem in the first instance absurd, but it would help us in interpreting some of these words if we could establish where we expected to find the things that are listed. It is not easy to group the words, to determine at any given point whether they are linked by alliteration, by function or by location, to assess whether the writer's repetitiveness is apparent or real, to grasp the nature of seemingly arbitrary connections. I do not give below the complete list, merely a section of it following on the words *and andlamena fela*, where items subsequently listed are in apposition to *andlamena*, translated by Skeat as 'implements', by Sedgefield and Swanton as 'utensils'. Some of the problems are outlined simply by comparing various translations of the text:²

<i>Old English</i>	<i>Skeat</i>	<i>Sedgefield</i>	<i>Swanton</i>	<i>Liebermann</i>	<i>Vassallo</i>
hwer	cauldron	cauldron	cauldron	Kessel	pentole
lead	lead vessel	boiler	lead vessel	Bleikessel	calderoni di piombo
cytel	kettle	lead kettle	kettle	Kessel	recipiente metallico
hlædel	ladle	ladle	ladle	Schöpfkelle	mestolo
pannan	pan	pan	pans	Pfanne	tegami
crocca	crook	earthen pot	pots	Topf	brocche
brandiren	fire-dog	branding iron (or andiron?)	fire-dog	Brandeisen (Feuerbock)	alara
dixas	dishes	dishes	dishes	Schüsseln	piatti
stelmelas	bowls with handles	handled pots	skillets	Henkelbecher	recipiente con manici
cyfa	tubs	tubs	tubs	Eimer	tinozze
cyflas	buckets	buckets(?)	buckets	Kübel	secchi
cyrne	a churn	churns	churn	Butterkerne	zangole
cysfæt	cheese-vat	cheese-dish	cheese-vat	Käsebehälter	botte per il formaggio
ceodan	bags	small tub (or bag?)	bags	Beutol (Körbe?)	borse
wilian	baskets	wicker baskets	punnets	Weidenkörbe	Panieri di vimini
windlas	crates	baskets	-----	Körbe	cestini
systras	bushels	sester-measure	bushels	Sextar- Hohlmasse	vasi (che contengono un sestario)
syfa	sieves	sieves	sieves	Siebe	setacci
sædleap	seed-basket	grain-basket or measure	seed-basket	Samenkorb	paniere per i semi
hriddel	wire-sieve	riddles	riddle	Sieb	crivello
hersyfe	hair-sieve	hair-sieves	hair-sieve	Haarsieb	stamigna
tænespilan	-----	sieve stand	sieve-rack	Siebstange	sostegni per il setaccio
fanna	winnowing- fans	fan	fans	Futter- schwinge	macchine vaglia- trici
trogas	troughs	troughs	troughs	Tröge	mastelli
æscena	ash-wood pails	wooden basket(?)	ash-wood pails	Holzgefäße	secchi di legno di frassino
hyfa	hives	hives	hives	Bienenkörbe	alveari
hunigbinna	honey-bins	honey-bin	honey-bins	Honigkörbe	vasi per il miele
beorbydene	beer-barrels	beer-barrel	beer-barrels	Bierbütten	barili per la birra

<i>Old English</i>	<i>Skeat</i>	<i>Sedgefield</i>	<i>Swanton</i>	<i>Liebermann</i>	<i>Vassallo</i>
bæofat	bathing-tub	bath-tub	bath-tub	Badewanne	vasca per il bagno
beodas	bowls	tables	dishes	Tische	tavoli
butas	butts	butts(?)	flasks	Bütten(?)	grosse botti
bleda	dishes	bowls	bowls	Schüsseln	ciotole
melas	vessels	pots	basins	Eimer	tazze
cuppan	cups	cups	cups	Becher	coppe
seohhan	strainers	strainers	strainers	Seihen	colini
candelstafas	candle-sticks	candle-sticks	candle-sticks	Leuchter	candelieri
sealtfæt	salt-cellar	salt-cellars	salt-cellar	Salzfass	saliera
sticfodder	spoon-case	spoon-case(?)	spoon-case	Behälter aus Reiserh* Reiserh*	astuccio
peperhorn	pepper-horn	pepper-horn	pepper-horn	Pfefferhorn-büchse	corno per pepe
cyste	chest	chest	chests	Kiste	casse

* (für Stöcke [= Pflöcke] oder für Löffel)

The list does not end here, but this portion of it contains words I am interested in investigating and grouping.

Some of the translators appear to have conceived of this exercise rather as compiling an entry for Roget's *Thesaurus* than an attempt to explore the meaning of the words and the nature of the list. Others, such as Liebermann, give identical translations for various Old English words (e.g. *Kessel* for both *hwer* and *cytel*; *Eimer* for both *cyfa* and *melas*; *Sieb(e)* for both *syfa* and *hriddel*) perhaps under the impression that they were reading Old English poetry where it is normal to repeat one's statements in a pattern of synonym and variation. Some simply miss out certain words, presumably by accident rather than design. Some insert question marks, others translate with certainty. The English translators all seem equally happy to translate an Old English word by its modern etymological derivative (e.g. *cytel* by 'kettle'; *trogas* by 'troughs') without concern for those readers untrained in philology who will inevitably be misled by this. There is a wide and fascinating variety of singular and plural usage. The Old English scribe is by no means consistent, but apparently intends the words in his list to be in the accusative following the statement *man sceal habban*. *Pannan* and *cuppan*, for example, could be grammatically singular or plural, but whereas it is easy to assume that any household controlled by a reeve was likely to have more than one *cuppa*, we may be slightly more hesitant about the quantity of *pannan*, especially when *cytel* and *hlædel* are apparently singular. Equally the scribe may occasionally have intended the singular to stand for the plural, or simply failed to rationalise his practice. Sedgefield's translations here seem simply arbitrary. There can be no reason why he should have transformed the feminine plural *binna* of *hunigbinna* into a singular or the *syfe* of *hersyfe* into a plural, when we have the simplex form *syfa* a little earlier indicating that the scribe is aware of a plural form ending in a.

One of the main difficulties with this list is that many of the words occur only rarely in extant Old English, and that where we can locate an example outside this text it is very often in the translation of a Latin word in a glossarial list. Such lists are not themselves compiled with consistent scholarly precision, and even where the modern commentator is fairly sure he knows the exact meaning of the Latin word (by no means a frequent occurrence) he is not clear whether the Anglo-Saxon glossator understood the Latin lemma, or understood it with the same semantic range that we believe it to have. Etymology can be helpful as a check here, and sometimes we can bring in Old High German cognates, as Liebermann was accustomed to do, for any supportive evidence they can give. Sometimes a word that has scarcely any currency in Old English, or in such of it as survives, is found in Middle English, and even Modern English, though more often as a dialect survival than as a standard form. We look to the archaeologists to tell us what artefacts were in common use, but even so it is not always possible to relate such objects to words on the *Gerefa's* list.

An obvious starting-point is to try and work out how the list was compiled. Isidore of Seville in his work on *Etymologies*,

well-known to the Anglo-Saxons, has in Book XX whole lists of receptacles, of which the most relevant to our text are *De Vasis Coquinariis* and *De Vasis Repositoriis*.³ Such lists lie behind some Old English subject-lists, and we are bound to ask ourselves whether the *Gerefa's* author had in any way been influenced by reading such works or lists. They may indeed have provided a starting-point for childhood Latin classes in the Anglo-Saxon period. Equally the compilation may be purely practical with the alliterative connections being no more than an automatic reflection of the modes of thinking produced by vernacular poetry, and the apparent links with glossarial lists an inevitable result of the shared subject matter. Yet it is not at first sight practical. The same type of object recurs at disparate points. Various objects connected with cooking equipment appear at the beginning of this section, then merge into a number of containers, dairy equipment and things like seed-baskets, sieves and fans which appear to have more to do with the harvest than the domestic scene. The hives are a particularly curious intrusion into an apparently indoor context. Then come more containers, cups, dishes, bowls etc., not to mention pepper and salt pots. Part of our interpretation will doubtless rest on how well-ordered we conceive such a household to have been, but if we can find some rational order it seems preferable to viewing the list merely as a rhetorical exercise, with *cyfa*, *cyflas*, *cyrne* and *cysfæt* occurring together only because they begin with *c*.

It is not only the contents and their arrangement that are puzzling, the omissions are almost equally so. The kitchen apparently contains no box except a *sapbox*, no *morter*, no *ceac*, no *horn* except a *piperhorn*, no *scenc* though this is one of the commonest words for a small drinking-vessel in the *Leechdoms*,⁴ no *bolle*, no *cucler*, though no-one trying to practise the herbal remedies of the *Leechdoms* could have managed without a whole range of *bollan*, large, medium and small sizes, and at least one *cucler*. It may be that some were omitted because the words were envisaged as synonyms, that *cuppan* and *scencas* were thought of merely as alternate names for the same thing, or it may be that different words were in fashion in different districts, periods or social groups. But the omissions make the apparent repetitions more startling. Why is it necessary to have so many different kinds of sieve, including the *seohhan* ('strainers') in a separate section from the *syfa*, *hersyfe*, *hriddel* etc? The balance of the list as well as its order is odd enough to merit investigation.

I take in the first instance the group from *hwer* to *brandiren*. These words are all concerned with the actual cooking of food, not the preparation, serving or storing, so we might perhaps up to a point expect some co-incidence with Isidore's *De Vasis Coquinariis*. *Hwer*, *lead*, *cytel*, *pannan* and *crocca* are all vessels in which food or water is heated, the *hlædel* clearly needs to be at hand to control the contents of the cooking-pots. The various odd translations of *brandiren* have, I think, obscured its direct connection with this group.

Translations can distort for us both the actual meanings of the words and the links between them. Modern English 'kettle' is

directly misleading as a translation of a word that was, like *hwer* used for a cauldron. In probing the precise distinction between a *hwer* and a *cytel* the one fact we may be sure of is that it is not the same distinction as that between Modern English 'cauldron' and 'kettle'. If we follow the Latin lemmata the difference was a simple matter of size. Latin *caccabus* is mostly glossed *cytel*, and *lebes* is mostly glossed *hwer*. It is not completely consistent. At least one glossator thinks that *lebes* is *hwer vel cytel*, but another that *lebes* is *lytel cytel*. Isidore tells us that the *lebes* is smaller than the *caccabus* and is made of bronze or brass. *Lebetæ aeneae sunt Graeco sermone vocatae: sunt enim ollæ minores in usum coquendi paratae*. On the other hand Ælfric clearly thought a *hwer* was quite big enough for St George to sit in comfortably:

and georius sat gesund on ðam hwere.⁶

It all depends on your standard of comparison. The only textual reference I know to the size of a *cytel* is the astonishing one in the *Leechdoms* where a *tynamber cytel*⁷ is required. We do not know precisely how much an *amber* is at any given period, but the lowest figure that has been put on it is the equivalent to the Roman amphora, approximately six gallons.⁸ On this computation a *tynamber cytel* would hold approximately sixty gallons and the larger Sutton Hoo cauldron holds 19.17. An *amber* of two gallons might be considered more probable.

The *Gerefa's* list does not tell us in so many words what any of the cooking pots were made of except of course for the *lead*, which is, as its name implies made of or more probably lined with lead.⁹ The *hwer* and the *cytel* are in other sources mostly specified as of bronze or copper. One gloss offers *cyperen hwer* as the translation of Latin *cucuma*,¹⁰ whereas St George's *hwer* according to Ælfric was *æren*. The common word in the medical texts for a metal cooking pot is *cytel*, and at least one remedy specifies that the stuff must be cooked in *cyperenum citele*.¹¹ A more valuable cauldron is specified in the will of the *ædeling* *Ædelstan* who donates to New Minster a silver *hwer* of five pounds.¹² The limited provision of one *cytel* only in the *Gerefa's* establishment contrasts markedly with the expectations of the men writing the *Leechdoms*, where on one occasion it is specified that a new *cytel* must be used, and on another it is recommended that the mixture be transferred from a large *cytel* to a smaller one as it is reduced by cooking.¹³

There is little comment required on either *hlædel* or *pannan*, the first clearly singular, the second most likely plural. Pans are frequently named in Old English texts, often with some defining word or phrase. They were normally of iron as the compound *isen-panne* and the regular link with *isen* as adjective shows. The 'frying-pan' shape is suggested by the frequent use of the adjective *brad*, and the compound *hyrsting-panne* glosses *frixorium*.¹⁴ Pans were doubtless used for other forms of cooking, and the gloss on *ferculum*, *ælces cynnes panmete*, 'all kinds of pan-food'¹⁵ presumably means any cooked food. *Panne* is also compounded with *cocer-* and *bræding-* and, interestingly, with *fyr-*. The last of these is not, as one might expect, a pan to be set above the fire,

but a pan that contains fire, probably glowing charcoal, so that things might be gently cooked over, not in, the *panne*. Latin *arula* is glossed *fyrpanne*, and the instruction in the *Leechdoms* to 'heat gently over warm embers/coals' *wlece listum on wearum gledum*,¹⁶ probably refers to such a method. A Middle English text distinguishes for us 'pans' and 'crocks' as cooking vessels defined by their shape:

A croke hadde olla for water boyleþ þer Inne . . . a
panne haþ an openere mouþ þan a croke . . .¹⁷

I am not sure whether *crocca* is an accurate feminine plural of a noun *crocc* or an error for masculine or feminine accusative plural (or singular) *croccan*. The Bosworth-Toller Supplement dutifully invents a feminine noun *crocc* for the benefit of this manuscript reading alone, putting other forms and occurrences under *crocca*. The Campbell Supplement adds the gloss *lagena* - *crocc*, which appears to support the existence of the form but is not conclusive evidence.¹⁸ *Lagena* is glossed elsewhere by the related but distinct word *crog*. *Crocc* appears as an Aldhelm gloss on the masculine accusative plural *caccabos* where it must be error or abbreviation for *crocca/croccan*. The Durham gloss could similarly represent the main syllable of a word rather than its full grammatical form, and *crocc* may be a ghost word called into existence by scribal error. The Middle English forms mostly imply derivation from *crocca* but this of course is not conclusive either. We ought also to reckon with the possibility that the scribe occasionally forgot he was intending to write his list down in the accusative and simply gave the nominative as it happened to occur to him. True he appears to distinguish forms with some care, but a late eleventh-century manuscript is not the most reliable of evidence for Old English grammar, and there are some odd endings elsewhere in the text. That *crocca* can be argued to be 'correct' by positing an appropriate nominative form is undeniable, but the possibility of error both here and elsewhere cannot be ruled out.

The meaning, however, is reasonably clearly that of 'earthenware pot' as we can tell from the frequent contexts in which *crocca* is found and as is implied by the etymological derivative 'crock'. It regularly glosses Latin *olla* which can be used for either cooking or storage. So presumably could a 'crock' which in Modern English is likelier to be used of a storage vessel as in 'butter-crock'. But most of the occurrences of *crocca* in Old English are in connection with its function as a cooking-pot, or at any rate a pot in which things were heated, not always necessarily for cooking purposes. Archaeologists can of course produce any number of cooking-pots from different dates and sites, but their methods of typology do not help us greatly with the Anglo-Saxon terminology.¹⁹ Presumably the main distinction between the type of cooking that cauldrons and pots were used for was determined simply by size. Surviving cauldrons, such as those at Sutton Hoo (see fig. 1) could clearly hold large quantities. Surviving cooking-pots are usually described as small. The *Leechdoms* when specifying something to be cooked or boiled in a *crocca*, seem more often to be implying things



fig. 1 Cauldron I restored



fig. 2 Front view of the Anastasius dish

prepared for immediate consumption, than quantities for storage. The writers of the *Leechdoms* are surprisingly careful to specify the kind of vessel to be used for the various preparations, and I note with interest their avoidance of the *lead*. But the laws concerning the heating of water for the ordeal require the use of a vessel that is *isen oððe æren*, *leaden oððe læmen* 'iron or bronze, lead or clay'. I do not know whether any practical point is being made here - why for example *cyperen* is excluded - or whether the formula is merely an alliterative ritual.²⁰

Brandiren with this spelling occurs nowhere else in Old English,²¹ though the variant form *brandisen* glosses *andena*. Similarly *brandrad*, *brandred* and *brandrida* gloss various spellings and mis-spellings of *andena*, as *andela*, *andeda* and *ardeda*. It is this gloss that is responsible for the translation 'fire dog', and its equivalent in German and Italian. *Andena* may indeed have been used of a linked metal framework supporting the logs laid on the hearth, rather than as in later use, the separate structures at either end of the hearth supporting logs, or in more recent times fire-irons. I am not sure that there is firm evidence that the Anglo-Saxons understood the word in this sense. The scribes were not apparently too clear about the form of the word they were glossing and may equally have been unsure of its semantic range. So, I think, may we. The Anglo-Saxons did not find it in their favourite source of explication, *Isidore*, and it is not used by *Aldhelm*. It occurs in gloss lists (alphabetical and subject) linked with words for fire or with words for cooking.

It is obviously possible to confuse that which is designed as a support for logs and that which is designed as a support for cooking-pots, and indeed there are presumably contexts where the same framework carries out both functions. But there is good evidence that *brandiren/brandrad* etc. were used specifically of the gridiron or trivet that supports cooking-pots over the fire (or that acts like the modern grill for direct cooking), and I suspect *andena* may have been so interpreted. The second element of *brandrad* and related forms is etymologically connected with the verb *ridan* 'to ride', and certainly implies something laid across the fire and riding it, rather than something supporting the fire itself. The Old Norse cognate *brandreið* and the Middle English derivatives *brandreth* etc. are clearly so used and so defined in the respective dictionaries. *Fritzner*²² translates *brandreið* as *rist som sættes over Ilden for derpaa at stege noget* ('the grill/gridiron which is placed over the fire on which to roast anything') and there is a precise Old Norse reference to cooking in such a manner, *steikja á brandreið*. The Middle English Dictionary offers virtually identical translations for *brandiren* and *brandreth* in all their orthographical variants: "A gridiron or trivet for supporting cooking utensils above a fire", and produces a range of supportive quotations of which the most interesting from my point of view clearly distinguishes a *brandiren* from an *andena*: *Jtem ii aundires and a brandire*, where the *aundires* may indeed support the *brandire*, but are not identical with it. The *brandiren*'s function is precisely defined in the quotation *Pro j longo brandyryn pour le range, pro ollis superponendis*.

Andena is glossed by the Old High German *brantride* in a subject list *De rebus coquine*,²³ where as in *Gerefa* it follows on from a group of words for cooking-pots and cauldrons. In the eighth- or ninth-century *Capitulare de Villis* attributed to the reign of Charlemagne or his son there is a list of useful equipment to be provided on each estate including *vasa aerea, plumbea, ferrea, lignea, andedos, andena, cramaculos* . . .²⁴ which has been cited as evidence for the meaning of *andena* as 'fire-dog' but looks to me as if it links *andena* with the cooking utensils in the same way as *brandiren* in the *Gerefa* list. If we compare Isidore's *De vasis coquinariis* we note that *andena* is absent, but following directly on the list of cooking-pots *cacabus, lebetae, sartago* there are *tripedes*, the tripods that support the cooking-pots over the hearth. One Old English gloss tells us that *brandisen* is *andena vel tripes*.

It seems clear to me that the Latin lemma *andena*, or modern lexicographical assumptions about the exact meaning of *andena*, have misled the translators of *brandiren* in *Gerefa*. (The translation 'branding iron' is so obviously aberrant as to be scarcely worth refuting.) The Middle English derivatives are a much more useful guide to the meaning here, and are supported by the Old Norse cognate and the gloss on *tripes*. But this must of course also cast doubt on how far we are entitled to rely on the gloss evidence, or our interpretation of it, in other instances. Where words are apparently well-known, and certainly in common use, gloss material can give useful definition and support, but in some items on the *Gerefa*'s list the Latin lemma may not be the most reliable of guides.

If *brandiren* is accepted as 'gridiron' or 'trivet' rather than 'fire-dog' or 'branding-iron' we can now see that the *Gerefa*'s first group of words from *hwer* to *brandiren* is centred entirely on cooking equipment in the same way that Isidore's section *Da vasis coquinariis* is centred. The *hwer*, *lead* and *cytel* are cauldrons, and it is natural that the *hlædel* should follow here, since these are containers of a size for the ladle to be a necessary adjunct. The *pannan* and *crocca* are specifically the pans and pots which are used for cooking, and the *brandiren* is the gridiron or trivet on which they are supported. Cauldrons, of course, do not rest on the fire, they are supported from a hook by chains and hang over the hearth. I think it probable that *dixas* the next word on the list should also be connected with this rather than the following group, even though 'dishes' are clearly objects for serving rather than cooking food. Like the ladle, the *dixas* need to be handy, but though the word *disc* is common enough in Old English, we need to explore its semantic range to find how closely it resembles that of modern 'dish'.

Since our translators tend to use words such as 'bowls' and 'dishes' both here and in the later section of the list, a primary question from any casual reader must be in what way the first-mentioned 'bowls' and 'dishes' differ from the later ones. Modern English 'dish' suggests perhaps pottery rather than wood or metal in the first instance, and has no precise connotations of size. In order to indicate size and shape one requires some such qualifying

term as 'pie-dish', 'meat-dish' or 'fruit-dish'. The vagueness is indicated by the fact that whereas a 'fruit-dish' and 'fruit-bowl' might be interchangeable, a 'meat-bowl' would not at all imply the object 'meat-dish'. For the Anglo-Saxons the word was in the first place a loan-word from Latin *discus* and we find it in a number of ecclesiastical and Biblical contexts, for example supporting the head of John the Baptist. It seems usually to have been thought of as a magnificent object both for its size and its value. Twice in *Beowulf* we have references to *discas* in descriptions of the treasure in the burial mound guarded by the dragon:

Him big stodaþ bunan ond orcas
discas lagon ond dyre swyrd . . .²⁵

Certainly the *disc* is not here keeping kitchen company. The *discus argenteus* which Bede tells us was set before King Oswald on Easter Day full of rich foods, apparently both contained enough food to satisfy a multitude of hungry beggars, and was itself of a size and quality to be still valuable when reduced to hacksilver. Ælfric and the writer of the Old English Bede both keep the word *disc* here.²⁶ Size is also suggested by the fact that the Old High German cognate *disc* glosses *mensa*²⁷ and in a number of modern forms of the West and North Germanic languages cognate forms of 'dish' have remained in use as the word for 'table'. Importance is indicated by the fact that it is regularly used for ecclesiastical vessels as in *huseldisc*, and that a distinguished office in a royal household was that of a *discþegn*. A *discþegn* occasionally appears as a charter witness; each established *discþegn* of King Eadred inherited 80 mancuses of gold.²⁸ The *æþeling* Æðelstan left to his *discþegn* eight hides of land, a stallion, a shield and a sword.²⁹ Menial status is not implied: a *discþegn* was not a dish-washer.

Evidently the *dixas* should properly be considered as something more of the dimensions of a tray, probably of silver, and to be compared with the great salver from Sutton Hoo known as the Anastasius dish (see fig. 2), for size if not splendour. Their inclusion at this point in the *Gerefa's* list I take to be because they needed to be instantly at hand to transfer the cooked meats from cauldron or pan to serving-dish. We should link the *dixas* like the *hlædel* rather with the 'cooking' group than the subsequent storage and container groups. Where the translators have used the word 'dish' later in the list for *bleda* or *beodas* the Old English words imply something quite other than *disc*.

After *dixas* I believe the author to move into his second section, though I am not sure whether this section includes the *cyrne* and *cysfæt*, i.e. the equipment linked with dairy produce, or whether those should be considered separately. There is little problem about either *cyfa* or *cyflas*, in spite of the fact that the second is so rare in Old English. The *cyf* was undoubtedly a large cask or tub as is indicated both by the fact that it glosses Latin *dolium* and *modius*, and that obsolete Modern English 'keeve' continued to have the sense of 'tub' or 'barrel'. There is no inconsistency here about the range of the word. *Cyfel*, the etymon of Middle English *covel* and obsolete Modern English 'cowl' was

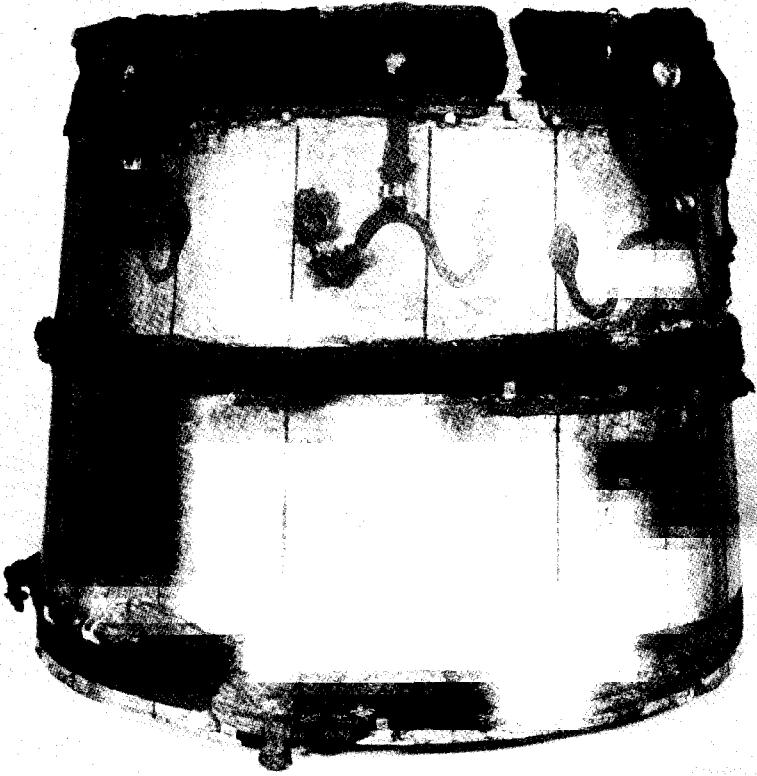


fig. 3 The Sutton Hoo tub: a reconstruction

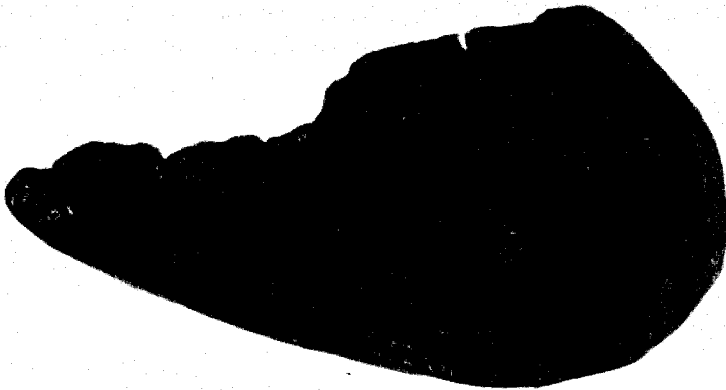


fig. 4 The principal fragment of the bowl or scoop

also used of a large vessel holding liquid, but must originally have represented a smaller one, being derived from the Latin diminutive form *cupella*. I take it that the author of *Gerefa* is saying here that he needs large and small casks or tubs, and that we should reserve the word 'bucket' for *æscena* later in the list. Most of the references suggest that *cyfa* and *cyflas* were normally for holding liquids, and if so they might be thought to link with the dairy produce as holding the milk, buttermilk and whey. But it is probably more sensible to think of them as general storage containers (see fig. 3). More problematic is *stelmelas* which is a *hapax legomenon* in Old English, and though both elements of the word can be found elsewhere, the compound does not recur in Middle or Modern English. We need to probe what 'handled bowls' or 'skillets' might be doing at this point in the list.

The element *stete* primarily means the 'stalk' of a plant. If it is used of an artefact it must therefore carry the sense of 'stalk' either as 'support' or as 'long stalk-like handle'. It could not be used of bowls with close-fitting or cup-type handles. A clear example in Middle English of the sense 'stalk-like handle' occurs in *Piers Plowman* where a "ladel . . . with a longe stete"³⁰ is used to stir the *crokke* and prevent it from boiling over. The difficulty about the combination with *mele* is that though *mele* (from the various Old and Middle English examples) appears to be correctly translated 'bowl', most instances of *mele* suggest a rather large bowl. In Middle English examples it is big enough to bath a child in, to wash the feet in or for camels to drink from. It gets listed in inventories, not alongside delicate table-ware, but among tubs, buckets and pails. In the Durham Account Rolls it is slotted in between churn and cheese-vats, *j kyrn, j meyle, ij chesfattet*.³¹ References to it as a container for food similarly suggest something of reasonably large dimensions. The texts of the *Leechdoms* do not usually specify quantities by the *mele*-full. One that does asks the practitioner to add a *mele*-full of butter which Cockayne translates 'basin'. But since this is being added to the concoction prepared in a *tynamber cytel* we may suspect a basin-full to be an inadequate amount.

A large bowl of the dimensions implied is not easily carried by a handle of the stalk-type, and in any case we need to ask why the *stelmelas* should be singled out here, when *melas* also occur later in the list. I suggest that one possible answer is that the *stelmelas* link with the casks and tubs in the same way that the ladle linked with the cauldrons, that is they represent the dippers or scoops which would be needed to control the contents of these large containers. Since *stelmelas* is a nonce-occurrence it is difficult to offer anything as definite as 'proof' of meaning, but we may note that neither of our modern words 'dipper' or 'scoop' go back directly to an Old English etymon. The existence of the scoop is demonstrated by archaeological evidence (see fig. 4), and in any case is obviously a necessary piece of kitchen equipment.

Thus I suggest we have semi-permanent storage-vessels in the *cyfa* and *cyflas* and that the *stelmelas* link with them. We move to two more semi-permanent fixtures with the *cyrne* 'churn' and *cysfæt*

'cheese-vat'. (Sedgefield's translation 'cheese-dish' is an absurdity.) *Ceodan* I am not sure about but from *wilian* to *æscena* we are clearly talking about transportable containers rather than permanent fixtures, and this I take to be the nature of the distinction between the *æscena* and the *cyfa* and *cyflas*. *Ceodan* occurs only here, but *ceodas* occurs in a gloss list translating *marsuppia*.³² It is the Latin lemma *marsuppia* that is responsible for the translation 'bags' but this must be erroneous. In the first place *marsuppia* are not general bags or sacks for storage, but the individual purse or pouch which was carried on a man's belt. In the second place *ceodas* is almost certainly an error for *seodas*, which is the regular gloss elsewhere in both singular and plural form.³³ *Seod* also occurs in this sense in the gloss *purs vel seod* for *fiscus*³⁴ and in Ælfric's Homily for St Martin's day where it is said that Martin carried nothing in his *seod* except what he needed for daily nourishment.³⁵ What I tentatively suggest we may have in the *Gerefa*'s *ceodan* is an error for *ceoldran* the singular form of which, *ceoldre*, occurs in the Corpus glossary with the sense 'milk-pail' translating *muluctra*,³⁶ which would link here with the other words for dairy products, the churn and the cheese-vat. I would not press this emendation, but I see no justification for the translation 'bags' and find this one slightly more likely in context.

The hives and honey-bins apparently begin a new section, and I look now to see if there is any connecting link in the intervening group *wilian* to *æscena*. They are mostly containers or sieves, the containers being on the whole portable. The *fanna* and *trogas* look odd, the first, if it is indeed a reference to winnowing-fans apparently connected with the main harvest, and 'troughs' in Modern English suggesting pig-feeding. I have not the space to examine these words in such detail as each requires, but draw attention simply to the possible nature of the group. The repeated references to sieves are suggestive, and a close reading of the various texts known as the *Leechdoms* provides a possible answer. I think this whole group is closely connected with the herb and seed harvest, with the garden produce rather than the corn, the baskets for collecting, the various sieves for sorting, and the *trogas* and *æscena* perhaps for storing. The *Leechdoms* make it absolutely clear how heavily the Anglo-Saxons relied on whole ranges of herbs for flavouring and medicine, including vast numbers of plants which we would scarcely consider herbal. Further, they make it equally clear how frequently sieves of various dimensions were required, and there are at least two occasions when we are reminded how much work all the preparation entails: a remedy that requires seeds of fifteen different plants, including fennel, dill, savoury, parsley etc. all pounded to dust, ends with the advice *Gewyrc þe dust genoh on hærfeste þonne þu þa wyrta hæbbe nytta þonne þe þearf sie*: 'Prepare enough of the powder in harvest when you have the plants, then use as necessary'.³⁷ Another text gives similar advice to shred herbs small when harvested, dry them, keep them over the winter and use as necessary.³⁸ One writer mentions the need to sieve barley meal before use, but the sieving and straining of herbs and plants in powder or liquid form is a constant requirement. I take it that the *Gerefa*'s *tæmespilan*, translated

'sieve-stand' or 'sieve-rack', is the frame on which a sieve can stand while the contents settle or drain.

As has been clearly pointed out in respect to Old Norse *trog* the sense 'trencher' rather than 'trough' is required.³⁹ In the *Leechdoms* one important use of the *trog* is for preparing fomentations or steam-baths. Herbs are laid on hot stones in a *trog*, water is poured over them and the steam, thought to be beneficial for various diseases of the flesh, is directed towards the part of the body that is suffering. One remedy recommends that the patient sit on a stool over the *trog* to get the full benefit of the hot vapours.⁴⁰ It is clear that the *trog* is part of ordinary household equipment, and the modern 'trough' misleading as a translation. The other misleading translation in this group is 'bushels' for *systras*. *Sester* derives from Latin *sextarius*, but has very different capacities at different periods and dates. Within the Anglo-Saxon period itself there is evidence for variation, but scarcely any evidence for equation with the bushel of eight gallons. The *Leechdoms* suggest something much closer to the Roman *sextarius* of a pint: *se sester sceal wegan twa pund be sylfyrgewyht*.⁴¹ The *Leechdoms* use the *sester* measure regularly for adding wine, water, milk, vinegar etc. and I am not clear that the average cooking *crocca* could have held eight gallons: one remedy asks the practitioner to put herbs in *anne niwne croccan and wæteres anne sester fulne*.⁴² Similarly one would, I suspect, feel fairly silly trying to pound twenty grains of a herb into eight gallons (*anne sester*) of wine.⁴³ There are of course other texts that imply different capacities, but I think it is the *Leechdoms* that offer the connecting links here for the *Gerefa* section from *wilian* to *æscena*, and that the *sester* was the pint-measure or jug which was regularly used in preparing herb-drinks, and doubtless for other culinary purposes.

The *beorbydene*, not beer-barrels, but barrels for *beor*,⁴⁴ are naturally linked with the hives and the honey-bins, the essentials for sweetening and fermentation. *Bæfæt* is baffling here, the translation 'bath-tub' being unchallengeable. I at first supposed it to occur here on the list because its size required it to be stored somewhere alongside the *beorbydene*, but an alternative explanation tentatively suggests itself to me. We know that vines were grown on the *Gerefa*'s estate since the instructions for the spring months include *wingearð settan* 'plant out vines' or 'establish a vineyard'. Could the *bæfæt* be the one vessel of the necessary wide and open shape for treading grapes? It is also possible that the *æscena* and the *trogas* might link rather with this section than the previous one, being for the collecting and storing of fruit for fermentation.

I think we have in the *Gerefa*'s list moved section by section through cooking equipment, large storage containers, dairy equipment, tools and containers for the collecting and preservation of the herb harvest, and the provision for the honey and honey-sweetened-alcohol stores. The last section I deal with is from *beodas* to *piperhorn*, *cyste* having been added to my list only to demonstrate how clearly the previous section ends at *piperhorn* and the *Gerefa*'s mind moves to the *cyste*, the large locked storage

containers which are not specifically connected with food provision, but might be the places where some of the more valuable tableware, especially anything of silver, would be kept. *Beodas* which begins this group is in itself a problem as the variant translations indicate. The normal meaning of *beod* is 'table' and the translators who offer a different translation do so for two reasons: (i) there are occurrences of *beode* glossing Latin words for tableware, not tables;⁴⁵ (ii) 'tables' appears to be an out-of-place item in this section of the list, otherwise devoted apparently to portable containers. *Sceamelas* and *stolas* come later. But *beodas* might quite rightly come here in the sense 'tables' if the author is beginning to think of the objects that go on the table at meal-times. Old Norse texts certainly imply that tables in that culture were as movable as the dishes on them. One does not, according to the sagas, clear away the pots from the table, one clears away the tables. Middle English poetry shows that this was also the case in medieval England. Thus *beodas* in the sense of 'tables' might well be the first item in a list subsequently concerned with tableware. Equally possibly the rest of the list could be in apposition to *beodas*, with *beodas* carrying the general sense of 'table equipment' rather than the 'bowls' or 'dishes' suggested by Skeat and Swanton, in the same way that *andlamena* prefaced the earlier section.

Some of the items in this section seem fairly straightforward. *Piperhorn* occurs only here, and we do not know if the *horn* element means an actual horn in which pepper was stored, a horn-shaped container, or a box made out of horn, but still it seems possible to translate the two elements of the compound by their etymological derivatives and leave it at that. I take it that *candelstafas* come in here, though other lighting equipment is listed later (*leohtfæt*, *blacern*), not as an aberrant item in a list of food and drink vessels, but because there need to be *candelstafas* on the tables when dining. *Sticfodder* seems an uncontroversial item as a case or box of spoons. The sense 'spoon' for *sticce* is well-attested in the *Leechdoms*; individuals would carry their own knives; the table would need to be supplied with spoons.

More difficult is the distinction between *bleda*, *melas* and *cuppan*, but I think we have enough evidence of the semantic range at least to make suggestions here. The *mele* as I pointed out above (p.71) is normally a large bowl, and often found in kitchen or dairy contexts. But we also have some references to the use of a *mele* for wine, and in the will of the *ædeling* *Ædelstan* there is a reference to a gift to Nunnaminster of a silver *mele* of five pounds.⁴⁶ *Bleda*, similarly valuable, are clearly smaller in size. *Æðelflæd* left four *cuppan* and four *bleda* to her *hlaford*, presumably as part of the heriot.⁴⁷ The *Leechdoms* envisage the *bledu* as holding the amount a man might be expected to consume at one time. No-one is ever expected to drink a full *mele* of anything, but certainly to drink a full *cuppa* or a full *bledu*.⁴⁸ I suggest that the difference between the *melas* and the *bleda* is that the *melas* were on the table as large serving bowls, and that each individual had his own *bledu* for food and *cuppa* for drink. The *seohhan* might well be necessary to strain the drink and we have archaeological evidence for small elaborate strainers that were clearly for use in

company rather than in the kitchen. We also of course have a fair amount of evidence for sets of silver bowls, a group of small ones accompanied by a single large one. I am inclined to posit that such groups consist of one *mele* and several *bleda*.

This leaves the two items in this section, *sealtfæt* and *butas*. I might have been tempted to argue from Middle English and dialectal evidence a translation 'salt-vat' rather than accepting 'salt-cellar' for *sealtfæt* if it had occurred at a different place in the list, and this indicates the difficulty of deciding on an appropriate methodology. Where alternate translations of the same word are possible and evidence is lacking for firm conclusions, I have tried to argue for coherence in the *Gerefa*'s list, and this has naturally affected my results. A different methodology - one based for example on word-counts - might lead to quite other conclusions. Thus for the last remaining problematical word *butas* the overwhelming evidence of Middle and Modern English 'butt' would support the sense 'butt' or 'cask' which all the translators except Swanton suggest, though two of them with misgivings indicated by their question-marks. The problem - as in *systras* - is one of size. From my view that we are talking about tableware it follows that 'casks' are not appropriate objects to put on the dining-table, and ought not to be in the list at this point.

The rationale underlying the translation 'butts' must of course be the Middle and Modern English word 'butt' which is regularly used for a barrel of wine, notably of Malmsey. I suggest that Middle and Modern English has been influenced entirely by French *boute*, and that we should look elsewhere for the meaning of *butas*. In this form it occurs in Old English only here, but *byt* (plural *bytta*) is more common and there is at least one thirteenth century spelling of *byt* as *butte*.⁴⁹ *Byt* is used regularly to translate Latin *uter* both as a gloss word and in Biblical contexts, (e.g. where one puts new wine into old bottles, *in byttum aldum*), and *trywen byt* glosses *flasca*.⁵⁰ The *byt* was not necessarily thought of as wooden. Latin *uter* implies a leather flask, but the Anglo-Saxons obviously thought of a *byt* as something breakable, since, though most translators of Matthew's Gospel ix 17 realize that the danger of putting new wine into old leather bottles is that the leather will be *tosliten*, one of them thinks in terms of shattered pot or glass: *þa bytta beoþ tobrocene*.⁵¹

My assumption therefore that we are following a list of things placed on the dining-table, causes me to look to Old English *byt* rather than Modern English 'butt' for the meaning of *butas* and to translate, as Swanton does, 'flasks'. But those who wish to argue that the only connecting link from *beorbydene* down to *bleda* is the initial *b* would have quite a strong case.

I have not pretended to examine any of the words in this list in depth. They all require more detailed, more carefully documented analysis, and doubtless the editors of *Gerefa* will supply this in their forthcoming publication. But one possible way of tackling these lists is to assume not only that the author wrote sense but also that his thought-processes had some sort of reasonable coherence. It may of course be a rash assumption. Professor

Cross once argued a good case for the 'literate' Anglo-Saxon. The various published translations of the *Gerefa* list suggest a wildly confused Anglo-Saxon. I append below an attempt to restore confidence in the common-sense of the *Gerefa* author.⁵²

APPENDIX

Section 1: *cooking equipment*

<i>hwer</i>	small cauldron (probably bronze or 'copper')
<i>lead</i>	leaden cauldron
<i>cytel</i>	large cauldron (bronze or 'copper')
<i>hlædel</i>	ladle
<i>pannan</i>	pans (iron frying-pans, perhaps also fire-pans)
<i>crocca</i>	earthenware cooking pots
<i>brandiren</i>	gridiron or trivet
<i>dixas</i>	large (silver?) serving dishes

Section 2: *storage*

<i>stelmelas</i>	scoops (bowls with long handles)
<i>cyfa</i>	large casks [possibly all to be linked
<i>cyflas</i>	smaller casks with Section 3]

Section 3: *dairy equipment*

<i>cyrne</i>	churn
<i>cysfæt</i>	cheese-vat
<i>ceo[l]d[r]an</i>	milk-pails

Section 4: *herb and garden harvesting equipment*

<i>wilian</i>	large baskets	[the etymology suggests open
<i>windlas</i>	smaller baskets	wickerwork containers]
<i>systras</i>	jugs or pitchers	(approximately pint measures)
<i>syfa</i>	sieves	
<i>sædleap</i>	seed container	
<i>hriddel</i>	riddle	
<i>hersyfe</i>	hair-sieve	
<i>tæmspilan</i>	sieve-supporting frame	(singular or plural?)
<i>fanna</i>	?	
<i>trogas</i>	trough-shaped wooden containers	[Section 5?]
<i>æscena</i>	ash-wood buckets	

Section 5: *honey and fermentation*

<i>hyfa</i>	hives
<i>hunigbinna</i>	honey bins
<i>beorbydene</i>	barrels for beor
<i>bæsfæt</i>	bath-tub (for treading grapes?)

Section 6: *tableware*

<i>beodas</i>	tables/tableware
<i>butas</i>	flasks
<i>bleda</i>	small individual bowls
<i>melas</i>	large serving-bowls
<i>cuppan</i>	cups
<i>seohhan</i>	strainers
<i>candelstafas</i>	candle-sticks
<i>sealtfæt</i>	salt-container
<i>sticfodder</i>	spoon-box
<i>piperhorn</i>	pepper-horn

Section 7: *storage containers (of the lockable type?)*

<i>cyste</i>	chests
etc. . . .	

NOTES

- ¹ The manuscript is listed and described in N.R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957) no. 65.
- ² R.I. Page gives full references to the editions and translations of this text in note 13 to his article in this volume, see p.207. I am much indebted to Alfio Martinelli for his help with the Italian translation of *Gerefa*.
- ³ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* . . . ed. W.M. Lindsay, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1911) II, book XX, viii and ix.
- ⁴ I refer to all the medical texts published by O. Cockayne under the title *Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft of Early England*, Rolls Series 3 vols. (London, 1864-6).
- ⁵ Up to a point I rely on the glossaries printed by T. Wright, *Anglo-Saxon and Old English Vocabularies*, 2nd ed., ed. and collated by R.P. Wülcker, 2 vols. (London, 1884; repr. Darmstadt, 1968) but this edition of the so-called "Archbishop Ælfric's Vocabulary" is so unreliable that any reference I quote from this I have checked against the manuscripts. The two glosses quoted are respectively WW 123, 39 and WW 439, 35; cf. 329, 34 & 5.
- ⁶ *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, ed. W.W. Skeat, EETS OS 2 (London, 1885; repr. 1966) vol. 1 part ii, p. 314.
- ⁷ *Leechdoms*, II, 86.
- ⁸ F.E. Harmer, *Select English Historical Documents* (Cambridge, 1914) pp.73-4.
- ⁹ It would be unlikely that lead on its own could be used for cooking directly over flame. Bronze lined with lead would survive longer than unlined bronze. The weight either of a lead cauldron or a ten-amber cauldron would be considerable and it may be that they were supported on feet, rather than hanging from chains. Old English *Þryfotad fæt* (three-footed vessel) glosses *trisilis* (Wright-Wülcker 124, 6) cf. Isidore XX, iv, 14 *trisceles Græco nomine, Latine tripedes*. The *led* of a Middle English lyric (*The New Pelican Guide to English Literature: 1. Medieval Literature* ed. Boris Ford (Harmondsworth, 1982) p.586) is a cauldron under which a frightened person can hide - "and doth me rennyng under the led" - which is hardly practical unless it is on legs supporting it some distance above the ground.
- ¹⁰ Wright-Wülcker, 123, 38. It is of course tempting to translate *cyperen* directly by its etymological derivative 'copper'. But though the Anglo-Saxons were undoubtedly drawing some distinction between *cyperen* and *æren* it may not be a distinction that is accurately reflected in the translations 'copper' and 'bronze'. The use of the word *cyperen* probably reflects the amount of copper in a metal alloy (tin/zinc/copper). Latin uses *æs* for both bronze and copper, but usually distinguishes copper by adding a defining word such as *cyprium*. *Aes* is normally and presumably correctly glossed by *ær*. The two words frequently occur side by side in the *Leechdoms* e.g. at II, 36, 1, *do on cyperen fæt oððe on ærenum fate*. One text distinguishes a *cyperen fæt* from *mæstling oppe bræsen*. *Mæstling* elsewhere glosses *aurichalcum* (Wright-Wülcker 96, 40); which is also called *grene ar* 272, 23.
- ¹¹ *Leechdoms*, II, 56.

- ¹² *Anglo-Saxon Wills*, ed. D. Whitelock (Cambridge, 1930) p.58.
- ¹³ *Leechdoms*, II, 44 and II, 98. *do þa ealle on micelne citel . . . do simle on læssan citel swa hio læsse sie.*
- ¹⁴ Wright-Wülcker 123, 14; cf. 215, 10; 243, 22; 330, 8.
- ¹⁵ Wright-Wülcker 409, 9.
- ¹⁶ Wright-Wülcker 7, 3; 124, 11; 294, 29; 348, 31; cf. *arula*, *heorð* 289, 6; *Leechdoms*, II, 26.
- ¹⁷ s.v. *crokke* in the *Middle English Dictionary* ed. H. Kuhn et al.
- ¹⁸ B. von Lindheim, *Das Durhammer Pflanzenglossar*, Beiträge zur englischen Philologie 35 (Bochum-Langendreer, 1941) no. 213; cf. *Leechdoms* III, 303: the manuscript (Ker, 110) is early twelfth century.
- ¹⁹ I do not, for example, know the Old English for 'vessels with faceted carination'.
- ²⁰ Copper and silver being rapid conductors would allow the water to cool more quickly. I am indebted to Professor Leach in the Department of Metallurgy in Nottingham for helpful discussions on some of these questions.
- ²¹ The existence of *A Microfiche Concordance to Old English* ed. A. diPaolo Healey and R.L. Venezky (Toronto, 1980) permits us to make statements like this with confidence.
- ²² J. Fritzner, *Ordbog over det Gamle Norske Sprog* (Oslo, 1954) s.v. *brandreið*.
- ²³ Elias Steinmeyer and Eduard Sievers, *Die Althochdeutschen Glossen* (Frankfurt, 1895; repr. 1969) III, p.372, 31, cf. p.633, 49; 643, 43; 645, 34-6 etc. The last of these links the ideas of the tripod and the hearth in the explanation *ferrum trivm pedum super quo ponuntur ligna ad faciendum focvm*.
- ²⁴ A. Boretius, *MGH: Legum, Sectio II, Capitularia Regum Francorum* (Hanover, 1883) 32.
- ²⁵ *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. F. Klæber, 3rd ed. (Boston, 1950) lines 3047-8; cf. 2775.
- ²⁶ *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. T. Miller, EETS OS 95 (London, 1890; repr. 1963) pp.164 and 6; *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, ed. W.W. Skeat, EETS OS 94 (London, 1890; repr. 1966) vol. 2 part i, p.130.
- ²⁷ *Die Althochdeutschen Glossen*, p.372, 4.
- ²⁸ *Select English Historical Documents*, p.35.
- ²⁹ *Anglo-Saxon Wills*, p.60.
- ³⁰ William Langland, *Piers the Plowman . . .*, ed. W.W. Skeat (Oxford, 1886) vol. 1, B XIX 274, p.566 and C XXIX 279, p.567.

- 31 Middle English Dictionary s.v. *mele* (2).
- 32 Wright-Wülcker, 31, 40.
- 33 E.g. Wright-Wülcker, 153, 7; 330, 24; 441, 29.
- 34 *Old English Glosses* . . . , ed. A.S. Napier (Oxford, 1900) p.187 line 36.
- 35 *Ælfric's Lives of the Saints* (2, i) p.222 lines 55-6.
- 36 Wright-Wülcker, 33, 17.
- 37 *Leechdoms*, II, 316.
- 38 *Leechdoms*, III, 8.
- 39 Bruce Dickins, "Old Norse 'Trog'", *Proceedings of the Orkney Antiquarian Society* 10 (1932) p.31.
- 40 *Leechdoms*, II, 327 and 341.
- 41 *Leechdoms*, III, 92; cf. *Select English Historical Documents*, pp.79-80.
- 42 *Leechdoms*, I, 239.
- 43 *Leechdoms*, I, 235; cf. 257.
- 44 C.E. Fell, "Old English *beor*", *Leeds Studies in English* 8 (1975) pp.76-95.
- 45 See my review of Louis Goossens, *The Old English Glosses of MS Brussels, Royal Library, 1650* . . . , in *Studia Neophilologica* 51 (1979) pp.159-61.
- 46 *Anglo-Saxon Wills*, p.58. Dorothy Whitelock translates *mele* as 'cross' not 'bowl'. In this she is following Thorpe, *Diplomatarium Anglicum* (London, 1865) who gives the erroneous spelling *male*, and translates 'crucifix' (p.558), and Lye, *Dictionary Saxonico* . . . (London, 1772) who includes text and Latin translation of this document, giving the correct manuscript spelling *mele* and the rendering *unam argenteam crucem*. Bosworth-Toller take the *male* spelling from Thorpe and cite under *mæl* 'cross'. There are good reasons for preferring the translation 'bowl'. *Mæl* in the sense 'cross' is always qualified e.g. *Cristes mæl*. Though the spelling *mel* is found as well as *mæl*, the grammatical ending here is not the one we should expect. *Geunnan* normally takes the genitive of the object granted (in which case we should have *meles*) but usage in this will varies between genitive and accusative e.g. *Ic geann Ælfsige bisceope þære gyldenæn rode* . . . and *anne blaene stedan*. If accusative it should be *mel* not *mele*. The word *mele* 'bowl', would have the correct accusative form *mele*, which is what we have here. Contextually the gift of a silver bowl, fits with the gift in the same sentence to another foundation of *æne sylfrene hwer*, 'a silver cauldron' and may be distinguished from the *rod* cited above which was given to Bishop Ælfsige, and occurs in a different place in the will.
- 47 *Anglo-Saxon Wills*, p.34.
- 48 Or even two. See *Leechdoms*, II, 118 for both the phrases *nime þy teopan morgne þæs drinces twa bleða fulle* and *drince* . . . on *undern gode blede*

fulle. .

- ⁴⁹ Wright-Wülcker, 552, 2; cf. 336, 3: (Ker's Catalogue no. 398).
- ⁵⁰ Wright-Wülcker, 240, 2; cf. 411, 22.
- ⁵¹ *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew . . .*, ed. W.W. Skeat (Cambridge, 1887) pp.76-7.
- ⁵² I am grateful to many colleagues at Nottingham and elsewhere for much useful discussion and advice. I should specifically thank the archaeologists, Philip Dixon and Leslie Webster for putting me right on some technical points, and the classicist Wolf Liebeschuetz for specialist advice on Latin vocabulary.
- [We gratefully acknowledge permission from the Trustees of the British Museum for the reproduction of photographs from *The Sutton Hoo Ship-Burial* by Rupert Bruce-Mitford (London, 1983) Vol.3, ed. Angela Care Evans, Vol.3, I, p.6; Vol.3, II, pp.489, 555 and 878:- Eds.]